



Office of the Governor

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Governor declares gun violence a public health emergency after murder of 11-year-old boy on his way home from baseball game

SANTA FE – Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham declared gun violence a public health emergency following the murder of an 11-year-old boy on his way home from a baseball game on Wednesday night.

“Today, I join the family of an 11-year-old boy in mourning his violent death yesterday. And I mourn the loss of a 5-year-old girl murdered in her bed last month. These are disgusting acts of violence that have no place in our communities. As a mother and grandmother, I cannot fathom the depth of these losses, and their effects will be felt by families, friends and communities forever. I send my most sincere condolences to the loved ones of both of these children.

“The time for standard measures has passed. Today I am declaring gun violence a public health emergency in New Mexico.

“This administration has done meaningful work to pass legislation, support law enforcement and significantly increase public safety resources to curb violence.

“But it is clear that we need to do more.

“I want to know that local officials are giving the epidemic of gun violence the attention it deserves. I want to know that every parent is making sure their guns are locked up. I want to know that district attorneys and judges are using every tool at their disposal to hold bad actors accountable. I want to know that every gun store is not allowing straw purchases. I want to know that every law enforcement agency is using our red flag law.

“But until that happens in every community in our state, New Mexicans will continue to die. We must hold each other to a higher standard for the sake of our children.

“To my fellow citizens: get loud. Step up. Demand change: from your neighbors, from your friends, from your communities, from your elected leaders. Enough is enough.

“I’ll be providing more details on this public health emergency tomorrow alongside law enforcement and criminal justice leadership.”

The governor called a meeting tomorrow to determine immediate steps that will be taken to crack down further on gun violence in New Mexico communities.

“Mayor Keller, I am again urging you to take every possible action to stem the flow of illegal drugs and guns into your city and stop them from getting into the wrong hands. Attorney General Garland, I have asked you—in fact begged you—to send additional federal agents to New Mexico on multiple occasions, only to be met with deafening silence.”

The Executive Order provides \$750,000 to state agencies for the purposes of quickly reducing gun violence and encourages mayors, sheriffs and other officials to request additional emergency funding from the state as well.

Gov. Lujan Grisham has asked the federal government to deploy additional resources to New Mexico since June of 2022. On Thursday the governor sent a fourth letter to the U.S. Department of Justice – urging them to send immediate resources to New Mexico to assist in stemming the tide of violent crime. She has regularly sent these letters over the course of the last year without action from the Department of Justice.

The Executive Order and letter to U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland are attached.

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State of New Mexico

Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor

September 7, 2023

The Honorable Merrick Garland
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Garland:

I write again to request assistance from the Department of Justice in combating the violent crime and drug and human trafficking that continue to plague the State of New Mexico.

Sadly, stories of horrific, violent crimes are becoming common. In fact, just in the month since I last wrote to you, four teenagers shot at a mobile home in Albuquerque and killed Galilea Samaniego, a five-year-old girl.¹ Another Albuquerque apartment was shot at in a drive-by three days later, resulting in the death of yet another victim.² Additionally, a cannabis farm in Estancia was recently discovered to have dozens of individuals on site who are believed to be victims of human trafficking.³ And today we learned that an 11 year old boy was killed and a woman critically injured a shooting that occurred just last night.⁴ These are just a few examples of the persistent violence occurring in our State.

As I have stated previously, both the nature and volume of these crimes require focused attention from the federal government. Allocating additional federal resources to New Mexico would not only benefit our State but also the region and the entire country, cutting off vast criminal networks at their source. Thus, I *again* request that the Department of Justice assign additional law enforcement agents

¹ Fallon Fischer, *Four Albuquerque teens face charges for drive-by shooting death of 5-year-old*, KRQE News (Aug. 21, 2023), <https://www.krqe.com/news/crime/four-albuquerque-teens-face-charges-for-drive-by-shooting-death-of-5-year-old/>.

² *Albuquerque police: 1 killed, 3 injured in apartment shooting*, KOB News (Aug. 17, 2023), <https://www.kob.com/new-mexico/ap-1-dead-2-injured-in-ne-albuquerque-shooting/>.


³ Laila Freeman, *New Mexico Attorney General's Office looks into cannabis farm for human trafficking allegations*, KRQE News (Aug. 16, 2023), <https://www.krqe.com/news/new-mexico/new-mexico-attorney-generals-office-looks-into-cannabis-farm-for-human-trafficking-allegations/>.

⁴ Gino Gutierrez, *11-year-old boy shot and killed near Isotopes Park late Wednesday*, Albuquerque Journal (September 7, 2023), https://www.abqjournal.com/news/11-year-old-boy-shot-and-killed-near-isotopes-park-late-wednesday/article_97470260-4d31-11ee-9314-f396e5bc2584.html#tncms-source=home-featured-7-block

to New Mexico to assist in curbing the escalating violence and drug and human-trafficking activity that is ravaging our great State.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to my Office if you wish to discuss this matter in greater detail. I thank you for your consideration and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,


Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor

CC: Tom Perez, Senior Advisor, Assistant to the President, and Director of Intergovernmental Affairs



State of New Mexico

Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER 2023-130

DECLARING STATE OF PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY DUE TO GUN VIOLENCE

WHEREAS, New Mexico consistently has some of the highest rates of gun violence in the nation;

WHEREAS, the rate of gun deaths in New Mexico increased 43% from 2009 to 2018, compared to an 18% increase over this same time period nationwide;

WHEREAS, guns are the leading cause of death among children and teens in New Mexico, and have led to the deaths of a thirteen-year-old girl on July 28, a five-year-old girl on August 14, and an eleven-year-old boy on September 6;

WHEREAS, New Mexico has recently experienced an increasing amount of mass shootings, including mass shootings in Farmington and Red River this year;

WHEREAS, these gun-related deaths and injuries have resulted in devastating physical and emotional consequences for individuals, families, and communities throughout the State;

WHEREAS, the impact of gun violence extends beyond physical injuries and fatalities—causing emotional trauma, economic burdens, and long-lasting consequences for those affected individuals and their families;

WHEREAS, the increasing number of gunshot victims strains our already over-burdened healthcare system and places undue pressure on medical professionals and resources;

WHEREAS, after consulting with the Secretary of the Department of Health, I have determined that the foregoing situation constitutes a statewide public health emergency of unknown duration, as defined by the Public Health Emergency Response Act; and

WHEREAS, the foregoing situation also constitutes a man-made disaster causing or threatening widespread physical or economic harm that is beyond local control and requiring the resources of the State pursuant to the All Hazard Emergency Management Act.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Michelle Lujan Grisham, Governor of the State of New Mexico, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the State of New Mexico, do hereby **DECLARE** that a state of public emergency exists throughout the State due to gun violence and **ORDER** and **DIRECT** as follows:

1. The Department of Public Health, Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, and Department of Public Safety shall immediately begin collaborating with my Office to provide an effective and coordinated response to this public health emergency.

2. The Department of Finance and Administration shall make available emergency financial resources in an amount not to exceed seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000.00) to the to the Department of Health, Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, and/or Department of Public Safety, in accordance with NMSA 1978, Sections 12-11-23 to -25. Funds shall be expended for the purpose of complying with this Order and shall be expended specifically to avoid and minimize economic or physical harm and to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. Funds shall be paid out upon warrants drawn by the Secretary of Finance and Administration upon vouchers approved by the Governor or an agent or agency designated by her for that purpose.

3. All mayors, sheriffs, and members of governing bodies of municipalities or counties are encouraged to request, if necessary, an emergency proclamation and implementation of temporary additional restrictions to address this public health emergency pursuant to the Riot Control Act.

4. All political subdivisions of the State shall comply with and enforce all directives issued pursuant to this Order.

I FURTHER ORDER and DIRECT as follows:

1. This Order supersedes any previous orders, proclamations, or directives to the extent they are in conflict.

2. This Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until October 6, 2023.


ATTEST:



MAGGIE TOULOUSE OLIVER
SECRETARY OF STATE

DONE AT THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE
THIS 7TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2023

WITNESS MY HAND AND THE GREAT
SEAL OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO



MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM
GOVERNOR

